

The Sovereignty of the People.

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hinder the general welfare of the community/' shall be rooted out.

In the initial arcadian programme of a Gaismayr, which resembles those of Suabia and Alsace in its agrarian keynote, there is still room for the hereditary authority of a Prince Ferdinand, who in his impotence at Innsbruck was obliged to temporise and concede some of its demands. In other regions the revolutionists lost all patience with hereditary authority, and championed a republic based on the sovereignty of the people. Though this idea does not seem to have found expression in any official programme, it appears here and there as part of the political creed of the insurgents. They might recognise an emperor, but it should be an emperor of their own making, the mere head of a popular State. In this State the multiplicity of sovereigns should disappear. One people and one ruler is the dominant aspiration. Princes and lords, whether secular or ecclesiastical, must be deprived of their usurped power and become simple citizens like the rest. For long this idea had floated in the popular mind, had found incorporation in a Frederick Redivivus—the emperor of the common man—and now the time had come for the people to create this Frederick by their own fiat, in virtue of their innate sovereignty. The doctrine of self-government, based on the people's will, is found gaining ground even in Suabia, in spite of the Twelve Articles of Memmingen. Down with hereditary sovereignty and hereditary class is the passionate cry of the nameless scribe who in this spirit wrote one of these wild philippics, which in the course of this wild year hurled the curse of the common man against his oppressors. " Whosoever among the princes and lords," thunders the author of this tract "To the Assembly of the Common Peasantry of the High German Nation and many other places," " devise and impose fresh laws and burdens for the sake of their own selfish interests, are traitors to their trusts, and act falsely by Almighty God, their one Sovereign Lord. What right has this crowd of financial man-wolves and behemoths to pile ever new burdens on the poor people ? This year it is a voluntarily accepted *corvee*, which next year is exacted as obligatory forced labour; for this indeed is how their ancient traditional justice has for the most part grown up. In what statute-